



# Department of Defense INSTRUCTION

NUMBER 1215.17

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Administrative Reissuance Incorporating Through Change 2, January 20, 1999

ASD(RA)

SUBJECT: Educational Requirements for Appointment of Reserve Component  
Officers to a Grade Above First Lieutenant or Lieutenant (Junior Grade)

References: (a) Section 12205 of title 10, United States Code

## 1. PURPOSE

This Instruction implements policy, assigns responsibilities, and prescribes procedures under reference (a) for determining educational institutions that award baccalaureate degrees that satisfy the educational requirement for appointment of officers to a grade above First Lieutenant in the Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve, and Marine Corps Reserve, or Lieutenant (Junior Grade) in the Naval Reserve, or for officers to be Federally recognized in a grade above First Lieutenant as a member of the Army National Guard or Air National Guard.

## 2. APPLICABILITY

*This Instruction applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Unified Combatant Commands, the Inspector General of the Department of Defense (IG, DoD), the Defense Agencies, and the DoD Field Activities.*

## 3. DEFINITIONS

3.1. Accredited Educational Institution. An educational institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Secretary of Education.

3.2. Qualifying Educational Institution. An educational institution that is accredited, or an unaccredited educational institution that the Secretary of Defense designates pursuant to subsections 6.1. and 6.2., below.

3.3. Unaccredited Educational Institution. An educational institution not accredited by an Agency recognized by the Secretary of Education.

#### 4. POLICY

4.1. It is DoD policy under Section 12205 of 10 U.S.C. (reference (a)) to require Reserve component officers to have at least a baccalaureate degree from a qualifying educational institution before appointment to a grade above First Lieutenant in the Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve or Marine Corps Reserve, or Lieutenant (Junior Grade) in the Naval Reserve, or for officers to be Federally recognized in a grade above First Lieutenant as a member of the Army National Guard or Air National Guard.

4.2. Exempt from this policy is any officer who was:

4.2.1. Appointed to or recognized in a higher grade for service in a health profession for which a baccalaureate degree is not a condition of original appointment or assignment.

4.2.2. Appointed in the Naval Reserve or Marine Corps Reserve as a limited duty officer.

4.2.3. Appointed in the Naval Reserve for service under the Naval Aviation Cadet (NAVCAD) program or the Seaman to Admiral program.

4.2.4. Appointed to or recognized in a higher grade if appointed to, or Federally recognized in, the grade of captain or, in the case of the Navy, lieutenant before October 1, 1995.

4.2.5. Recognized in the grade of captain or major in the Alaska Army National Guard, who resides permanently at a location in Alaska that is more than 50 miles from each of the cities of Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau, Alaska, by paved road, and who is serving in a Scout unit or a Scout support unit.

4.3. Waivers. *During the period beginning on October 17, 1998, and ending on September 30, 2000, the Secretary of the Army may waive the applicability of*

*subsection 4.1., above, to any officer who before October 17, 1998, was commissioned through the Army Officer Candidate School. Any such waiver shall be made on a case-by-case basis, considering the individual circumstances of the officer involved, and may continue in effect for no more than two years after the waiver is granted. The Secretary of the Army may provide for such a waiver to be effective before the date of the waiver, as appropriate in an individual case.*

4.4. The Department of Defense will designate an unaccredited educational institution as a qualifying educational institution for the purpose of meeting this educational requirement if that institution meets the criteria established in this Instruction.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, under the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, shall:

5.1.1. Establish procedures by which an unaccredited educational institution can apply for DoD designation as a qualifying educational institution.

5.1.2. Publish in the Federal Register DoD requirements and procedures for an unaccredited educational institution to apply for designation as a qualifying educational institution.

5.1.3. Annually, provide to the Secretaries of the Military Departments a list of those unaccredited educational institutions that have been approved by the Department of Defense as a qualifying educational institution. This list shall include the year or years for which unaccredited educational institutions are designated as qualifying educational institutions.

5.2. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall establish procedures to ensure that after September 30, 1995, those Reserve component officers selected for appointment to a grade above First Lieutenant in the Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve or Marine Corps Reserve, or Lieutenant (Junior Grade) in the Naval Reserve, or for officers to be Federally recognized in a grade above First Lieutenant as a member of the Army National Guard or Air National Guard, who are required to hold a baccalaureate degree, were awarded a baccalaureate degree from a qualifying educational institution before appointment to the next higher grade. For a degree from an unaccredited educational institution that has been recognized as qualifying educational institution by the Department of Defense to satisfy the educational

requirements of reference (a), the degree must not have been awarded more than 8 years before the date the officer is to be appointed, or Federally recognized, in the grade of Captain in the Army Reserve, Army National Guard, Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard, or Marine Corps Reserve, or in the grade of Lieutenant in the Naval Reserve.

## 6. PROCEDURES

6.1. An unaccredited educational institution may obtain designation as a qualifying educational institution for a specific Reserve component officer who graduated from that educational institution by providing certification from registrars at three accredited educational institutions that maintain ROTC programs that their educational institutions would accept at least 90 percent of the credit hours earned by that officer at the unaccredited educational institution, as of the year of graduation.

6.2. For an unaccredited educational institution to be designated as a qualifying educational institution for a specific year, that educational institution must provide the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs certification from the registrars at three different accredited educational institutions that maintain ROTC programs listing the major field(s) of study in which that educational institution would accept at least 90 percent of the credit hours earned by a student who was awarded a baccalaureate degree in that major field of study at the unaccredited educational institution, as of the year of graduation.

6.3. For an unaccredited educational institution to be considered for designation as a qualifying educational institution, the unaccredited educational institution must submit the required documentation no later than January 1 of the year for which the unaccredited educational institution seeks to be designated a qualifying educational institution.

6.4. The required documentation must be sent to the following address:

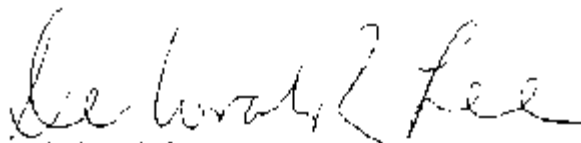
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs  
Attn: DASD(M&P)  
1500 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC: 20301-1500

6.5. Applications containing the required documentation may also be submitted at any time from unaccredited educational institutions requesting designation as a

qualifying educational institution for prior school years.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Instruction is effective immediately.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Deborah R. Lee".

Deborah R. Lee  
Assistant Secretary of Defense for  
Reserve Affairs